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PLAN FOR A NEW INDIA

A CALL TO ACTION

The following 'Manifesto' issued by the New India League, while setting forth its Aims and Objects, outlines the shape of New India to be, in the organization of her political, economic and civic freedom.

The New India League exists in order to uphold certain aims and ideals which it considers to be of vital and profound importance to India, in order to shape her future on lines that will give her people the maximum of efficiency and happiness, and help her to promote the happiness of all other peoples in the world. The League is not a political party with any narrow party interests, opposed to those of other political parties. Nor does it compete with them for favours either from the electorate or the Government. All those who subscribe to the Objects and Principles of the League are welcome to its membership, provided they are willing to act loyally in concert with their fellow-members and according to the Constitution of the League. Strenuous propaganda of an educative character is the method to which the League will steadfastly adhere.

Freedom of India

First and foremost among the objects of the League stands the Freedom of India.

This freedom has two broad aspects, external and internal freedom for India as a whole from foreign domination or control, and the maximum freedom possible for each of its constituent parts and its individual citizens. The Freedom which the League contemplates for India as a whole is Freedom, complete and unqualified, which should give her a status of dignified equality with all other sovereign States and Nations, whether within or without the British Commonwealth, and enable her to determine her own future in a manner which will subserve her own and the world's true happiness.

The League gives its allegiance to the concept of a United India. united within her natural frontiers, united by all those factors which make a solid, self-contained economy, united by the will of her people. The New India of the future must be politically, geographically, economically, and socially so constituted as to tend in course of time to become more ever firmly

integrated. The unity of a biological wholeness, inclusive of every aspect of the National life, is the unity which the League envisages for India.

It is obvious that within such a body the Indian States must find their proper place.

India's Foreign Policy

Now that India is very near to the attainment of her full political stature, she must determine for herself the spirit in which she will fulfil her international duties and her policy as a sovereign Nation. The New India League has no doubt that India's supreme aim must be the creation and preservation of a state of universal peace based on freedom and justice. That she herself will have no thought of aggrandisement of any sort is taken for granted by all Indians. It must be the steadfast aim of her National Government, in a world of power politics and prejudiced propaganda, to set a standard of disinterested humanitarianism and truthfulness in her dealings with other Nations. India must lead as a Nation prepared to make sacrifices for a lasting peace and for the establishment of fundamental human rights everywhere throughout the globe. She must so orient her external policy as steadily to promote recognition of the entire humanity as one family, though with many branches, and increasingly eliminate the causes of wars amongst them. Such an ideal requires close co-operation and understanding between the Nations of the East and the West, without a fostering of which the most catastrophic war of the future will be a war between these two different sections. The peoples of the East must first be liberated from their political bondage and established in the security of freedom. When that is achieved, the further history of the relations between the white and the coloured races must be inspired by co-operation and understanding. With this great end in view the League believes that India will do well to establish her relation with Great Britain on a basis of completely free and equal partnership, if Britain elects to accept such partnership for

the business of ensuring the peace of the world and the freedom of all peoples. Such a union, if formed and maintained, for the promotion of the truly spiritual purpose of giving to the world the blessing of peace, in which every people will be able as in a new dawn to blossom with its distinctive genius, is an ideal worth our well-directed efforts.

The Type of Indian Polity

The New India League aims at the evolution of a polity for India which can be described in the truest sense as a "Commonwealth." In a political commonwealth, all must share certain rights, without distinction of race, creed, colour, or sex. Certain fundamental rights must be laid down as a safeguard against exploitation either by other individuals or by the State itself. These must include the right of protection and education during the early years of childhood and adolescence, maintenance and care during old age and periods of disability, the right to livelihood during manhood, including the right of independent livelihood for women, besides security of person and property for all and freedom of one's own way of life in thought, speech, and action, qualified only by respect for the equal rights of others.

In addition to these individual rights, there must be a sharing of the common right to manage all common affairs to the best advantage of each and all, in other words, the right of democratic Government. But this right must be made real and not a mere legal fiction or theory.

In India the ideal of a political commonwealth, or Self-Government for the masses, can be materialized only when the principle is acknowledged that the vote must have as far as possible a direct and immediate effect, and it must represent some knowledge of the conditions and problems which it is meant to affect. One of the requisites for this is obviously vesting the largest measure of autonomy possible in the subordinate parts of the administration, and basing the government of each of these parts on voting in its

(Continued on p. 6)

NEW INDIA

October 15,

1946

The prophecy of the dreamers that India shall be a mighty Nation is proving true today. That is the India that is coming, that is the India that is building, and you are the builders. —Annie Besant.

ON WITH THE GREAT WORK

The two words "New India", the name of Dr. Besant's paper in 1914, marked a new era in the National consciousness of all Indians. She gathered round herself a band who fought valiantly for India's liberation. The fight is not yet over.

Those who still stand by her policies, and take them as their watchword, feel that they have still a contribution to give to mould India's future. The two words "New India" represent a clear outlook and a policy that must be considered by all patriots, however much at the moment that policy is overshadowed by those of far greater majorities. For many years Dr. Besant associated with her as her co-worker in *New India* Mr. N. Sri Ram. By her will, she left *New India* as his "absolute possession". Mr. Sri Ram is with us still to continue, with the help of others, Dr. Besant's policies. Never was a time when the old message of "New India" is needed as urgently as today.

"On with the Great Work" is *New India's* call today.

—C. JINARAJADASA.

OURSELVES

Once again the banner of *New India* is being unfurled, and this journal, which bears that proud and immortal name, makes its appearance this time from Benares, the first Indian home of Dr. Annie Besant of revered memory, in the shape of a fortnightly, soon we hope, to be developed into a weekly. *New India* has had several incarnations already, the last one being in the form of *Conscience*, which unfortunately

had to be stopped last year because of the illness of its Editor, Dr. G. S. Arundale, which illness later lost us also his invaluable leadership. While he was with us he strove faithfully through that medium to advance the work of Dr. Besant for the restoration of India to her proper greatness, valiantly upholding her statesmanlike principles and methods. That work remains now to be completed.

Now that India is at long last about to attain her National Freedom, having been given the right to frame her Constitution and enjoy a Government composed of her own national leaders, it is most urgently necessary that the voice of *New India* should be heard again, in order that the principles by which India should re-shape her polity and play her part as a self-governing Nation may have as wide and potent an influence as possible.

These are times of confusion and uncertainty not only in the outer affairs of men, as the situation all over the world daily testifies, but also in their hearts and counsels. This darkness *New India* will strive to dispel with her light to the measure of its ability. Its motto will be the same as that of *Conscience*, "Free, Fearless and Friendly"; and may the blessing of India's great Guardian Sages rest upon this little journal, which is being launched at this most fateful hour with the sole aim of helping her quickly to take her proper place among the Nations, wisely and mightily to re-order her internal affairs, and both by example and action guide them towards a condition of stable peace and happiness.—Eds.

TO OUR READERS

Our hearty greetings go to all readers of *New India* with this first issue, published from Benares. On assuming the editorial responsibilities of this journal, our first thoughts are naturally turned with reverence and gratitude towards our illustrious predecessors in office, who have made history in India's progress towards her destiny. We are

conscious that we cannot size up to their eminence, but we shall constantly endeavour to maintain and uphold those great principles for which they stood, counting no sacrifice too great. Today, when India stands on the threshold of her freedom, it may well nigh be difficult to look back and cover the long panorama of the earlier struggles of those who have pioneered our Freedom Movement. And yet, it must be admitted that we are nearing the journey's end today because of the great self-sacrificing pioneer work done by those leaders who, alas, are no longer with us today physically to witness the approaching consummation of their dreams. But we have no doubt that their blessings are with all those who sincerely seek to serve the dear Motherland, as they did. With their blessings, and the living inspiration that the memory of their life and work constantly impinge on us, we shall march on unflaggingly towards our goal.

Our next thoughts go to those great leaders of India who, at this critical juncture in the history of this country and of the world, have taken upon themselves the great burden and responsibilities of office. We rejoice that what may be called a people's government has been set up at the Centre. We are thankful that the task of forging a Constitution for India will shortly be taken up by a duly elected Constituent Assembly. We sincerely hope that all the parties and interests in India will participate in this

Constituent Assembly and produce, ere long, a Constitution that will represent at once not only the greatest common measure of agreement between all the elements in India on the one hand and Britain on the other, but will also be the pride and glory of India. We wish and pray that the transfer of power to Indian hands, *de jure* may soon be accomplished in just as graceful a manner as it has been done *de facto*. In the meantime, we wish the Interim Government at the Centre all success in their effort at establishing peace and progress in the country and in promoting goodwill and amity abroad.

New India thus re-emerges at a great moment in the history of our country. In its previous incarnations, it had largely to play a fighting role, although the role played by it in building up India as a Nation has been of no inconspicuous a nature. Today New India needs great building up. The work of Constitution making has to proceed at a swifter pace so as to outwit the disruptive elements found in abundance in the world today. *New India* will address itself to this great task faithfully and assiduously. *New India* hopes for the encouragement and support of all those who truly love India and who long to see the Mother stand up again in all her splendour on her own soil and spread her benign influence over all parts of this One Great World.

—R. M.—G. R. V.

THE TASK BEFORE THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT

ROHIT MEHTA

The popular Government at the Centre, now functioning for more than six weeks, has naturally aroused great hopes in the hearts of the common men and women of this land. For more than sixty years the Indian National Congress has been fighting for the realization of this dream of a People's Government at the Centre. For all these years our main work in the Indian Nationalist Movement was to fight the British Government and the steel-frame of Indian bureaucracy. In this fight, carried on now

for more than seven decades, many illustrious sons and daughters of Mother India have laid down their lives. On the assumption of office at the Centre by the People's Representatives, we would do well to remember with reverence and gratitude such heroic fighters in the cause of India's Freedom (who are no more with us) as Dadabhoi Naoroji and Phirozeshah Mehta, Surendranath Bannerji and Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Lokmanya Tilak and Annie Besant, Lala Lajpatrai and Chitranjan Das, Dr.

Ansari and Pandit Motilal Nehru and a host of others. But for their sacrifices and their selfless services, we would not be on the threshold of Freedom as we are today.

A New Phase

The Indian National Congress, the spear-head of India's political Movement, is now on the point of closing one of the most glorious chapters in its life. The formation of the Interim Government brings us on the doorstep of another phase in the life of this Country. The Indian Nationalist Movement must now embark upon the stupendous task of National Planning. It is comparatively easy to fight a foreign Government; it is extremely difficult to face an enemy within the gate. The Nationalist Movement in India has now come to the stage when the enemy within the gate has to be fought in order that the New India of our aspirations may be worthy of her great ancestors. This enemy within the gate is represented by the forces that hamper India's progress, the forces that prevent India from breaking the shackles of social custom, of religious superstition, of economic vested interest, of cultural enslavement, of political opportunism. This is indeed a herculean task to which the Interim Government is called upon to address itself. In the discharge of this great responsibility the members of the National Cabinet will need active support of every citizen of India who has the welfare of his Country at heart and who is able to rise above party considerations and personal loyalties.

Wanted a Plan

It is true that the Interim Government cannot launch out on schemes of a long-term nature inasmuch as it does not know how long it will be required to shoulder the responsibilities of the State. But considering the path yet to be traversed between now and the attainment of the final objective, one must admit that their term of office will be sufficiently long, unless they chose to resign, to enable them to put into operation a Five-Years' Plan of National Reconstruction. These five years will be of great

importance in the life of the Country. It is during these years that the foundations of India's national structure will have to be laid. And so, while the Interim Government must tackle the immediate problems affecting the life of the people, it must do so in the background of fundamental principles on which India's National life is to be rebuilt. The people of India will naturally expect to be informed as to what are the basic principles on which the Interim Government takes its stand for the solution of the immediate problems facing us today.

Vital Problems

The task before the Interim Government is no doubt to root out corruption, to organize proper food and cloth supplies to the people, to reorganize and co-ordinate India's transport system, to give a fillip to India's industrial and agricultural development, to infuse a national spirit in the Indian Army, to strive at a greater understanding between the different communities in this Country, and to do all that is possible to take India as speedily as possible to the realization of her political objective. But in the discharge of these duties it is not mere political expediency that must guide them. The Country has a right to expect from the Interim Government a clear enunciation of the broad principles in the light of which they propose to tackle immediate problems. In other words, what are the principles on which they propose to reorganize India's industrial and agricultural life, for on it depends the manner in which the problem of food and cloth supplies will be tackled? What schemes do they propose to initiate for the political education of the Indian people, for true it is that the Indian Democracy must derive its strength from the education of its electorate? What is its general policy for the nationalization of the Indian Army—whether it proposes to move in the direction of establishing a People's Militia or aims merely at the creation of a professional military class? What is going to be India's attitude in Foreign Affairs, what effective steps does it propose

to take to avoid the emergence of another war? These and many other vital issues need to be clarified, for thus alone can an intelligent co-operation be called forth from the patriotic citizens of this Land.

Above everything else, the Interim Government must inspire the whole Nation to embark upon new adventures of Nation Building. The whole country must be enthused to work for a common purpose. The Interim Government must initiate a constructive revolution of the people so that the common man and woman may begin to work for true National freedom based on India's cultural and spiritual greatness.

(Plan for a New India: Continued from page 2)
own area. The whole structure of Government, elaborate as it must be, considering the vastness of India's population and the variety of conditions in this sub-continent, must be subject to a law of political gravity, so that the mass of the administration will tend towards the bottom and not the top. Moreover, the more complex an organization, and the higher the standards of performance expected of it, the more scientifically it must be constituted to fulfil its requirements. For the ensuring of satisfactory Government, without which democracy will soon result in contrary reactions and complications, the vote must be always an intelligent vote, the man who is elected to an office must be well qualified to perform its duties, and the administration so divided as to ensure that both judgment and action are based on a complete knowledge of local and relevant factors.

The Commonwealth of India Bill

Dr. Annie Besant's Commonwealth of India Bill, which was passed by a National Convention in India and read in the British Parliament for the first time, was framed on these considerations. According to the scheme of that Bill, there were to be five administrative units, all elected and representative: (1) The Village Panchayat, (2) Taluk Council, (3) District Council, (4)

Provincial Legislature, (5) Central Legislature. The mass of the business of administration which has to do with the immediate physical needs of the people was vested in the Village Panchayat (Council) which must become the primary unit of the whole administration, a unit controlled not from above, except for directives for certain specific purposes of uniformity or co-ordination, but by the adults in its own area, both men and women, who were given the vote for annual election to the Panchayat. The Taluk Council, elected by a slightly restricted electorate, possessing more qualifications for administrative duties than the Village Panchayat, was made responsible for such matters as are best administered for a group of villages as a whole; and the same principles determined the grading of franchises and functions for three larger and higher units of District Council, Provincial Legislature and All-India Legislature. In each of these areas elections were from undivided constituencies making up a non-communal electorate. The Provinces under this scheme enjoyed in relation to the Central Government the largest measure of freedom possible. Such a political order as that outlined above will conduce to stability, efficiency, and unity.

Economic Democracy

It is not enough to give political freedom and arrange the administration on ideal political lines; there must be a co-extensive economic order which will make that freedom a reality and turn it into constructive channels. Each Village, Taluk, and District Council must become not only as far as possible self-sufficient for political purposes, but also an organ for the economic development of its natural resources and their proper use and distribution, so that it may be able to minister to the needs of the people within its area. The ensuring of the fundamental right to maintenance, education, and care for the people in each area is best accomplished through the agency of these local bodies, and this would be possible when agriculture, trade, and

were taken from them and their states were absorbed in the German Reich.

Grouping of the States

An arm-chair regrouping of Indian States into 21 major States and amalgamation of the rest into the Provinces is neither fair nor desirable.

The Paramountcy in India has become a huge hospital with a number of patients undying but suffering from incurable diseases. Territorial redistribution of these petty States, which cannot maintain a policeman and a school-master, is overdue. What must be the exact number to be retained is a matter for consideration by a Royal Commission of not more than three, who may be appointed to ascertain facts and take into account all relevant factors.

The Rulers

These relics of medievalism can continue only if they play their role as constitutional monarchs amidst a responsible Government. Our Indian rulers can find no better or nobler parallel than His Majesty the King George VI of England.

In this atomic age every unit has to continue sufficiently strong and effective. The Indian Union which is to embrace the Provinces and Indian States can be born only if the Indian States are reduced to a manageable number. The States can retain residuary sovereignty only if they can guarantee *freedom and competence* to the subjects.

Monarchy of a despotic type or of a feudal nature has no place in the modern world. In ancient India monarchs were under the threefold *restraint* of Ministers, a System of Law, and public opinion indicated by guilds, castes and crafts. These precious picturesque relics, it is good for Indian culture to retain; but in this scientific age they could function only if *peace and freedom are guaranteed to their subjects*.

In a sense, our Indian problem is basically *economic*. Our standard of life has to be raised. No Indian State has a right to

exist when it cannot guarantee a *civilized government in an atmosphere of freedom*.

*A suggestion like this has been made by the present author in his lecture on *Indian States* before the American Institute of Public Relations on 27th June 1946 at New York.

NEW INDIA

Owing to unforeseen circumstances and the long delay involved in the negotiations with the Provincial and the Central Governments for obtaining the necessary printing paper, we regret that *New India* could not be started in September, as it was originally planned. The Management is thankful to all those friends who have sent us their subscriptions in the meantime and patiently borne the delay.

New India is a non-party journal, not the organ of, or affiliated to any party or group. The Editors do not accept responsibility for the views expressed by any contributor in any article signed or unsigned, except for signed editorials and paragraphs of comment by the Editors, which will appear under their respective initials.

All articles and communications intended for publication in *New India* should bear the name and address of the writer, not necessarily for publication but as a guarantee of good faith. In preparing Mss for the press, contributors are requested to write on one side of the paper only, and to address their communications to the Managing Editor and not to any individual by name. Rejected articles will not be returned unless sufficient postage is enclosed by the contributor.

Contributors are requested to note that space being limited, articles should be as short as possible.

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industry within their areas, and in the country at large, are made parts of a unified economy based on public ownership of land and of all necessary industries. Thus there will be elimination of unhealthy and wasteful competition in trade and industry, the diversion of it into healthy channels, the maximum production of the necessities of life such as food, on scientific lines, and their equitable distribution. There can be plenty of room even in such an economy for individual tastes and initiative.

Though the economy which we adumbrate will be decentralized in its working, each part, whether Village, Taluk,

District, or Province, revolving round an axis of its own, and all interlocked only to the extent of the necessary co-ordination, it should be possible under the Constitution in any emergency, to give a central direction from the All-India Government to the extent that is needed, and enforce compliance.

What the People Need

The New India League thus stands for economic as well as for political democracy, but a democracy which is real and efficient and calculated to deliver to the people the goods for which they are asking, namely, peace, freedom, contentment, and livelihood.

INDIAN STATES IN A FREE INDIA

PROF. K. R. R. SASTRY

(University of Allahabad)

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, our trusted pilot has taken charge of the ship of state. Clouds hover round the Sun; the standard of life in our Land has to be raised; the advances of science have to be utilized to improve sanitation, health, and the strength of our villages. In such a setting, our medieval Indian states have to play the role of *strong units* in the United States of India. What are these States?

The Indian States form an almost continuous chain of landlocked territories down the spine of India surrounded by the narrow strips of sea-coast which were occupied by the English in the course of their acquisition of power. Travancore, Cochin, Kathiawar peninsula and Cutch island—these exhaust the sea-board of Indian States. They cover an area of 712,508 square miles, while British India has an area of 11,006,171 square miles; their population is 93,000,000, while the population of British India is 296,000,000.

They vary in size, population, revenue and level of internal administration. Hyderabad has a population of about 18 millions while a petty estate as Bilpary has a population of 27. Of these states, 178 have an area of 10 to 100 sq. miles each,

202 have an area of less than ten sq. miles each, and 139 have an area of less than 5 sq. miles each and 10 have not more than 1 square mile each.

Status

Many Indian States had maintained an independent existence for hundreds of years and some States as Travancore, Jammu, Orchha and Hyderabad and many of the Rajput States had never been conquered or annexed. The Indian States had lost the character of Independence by a gradual change in the policy pursued towards them by the British government in India.*

The basic problem with Indian States is that unless their number is reduced scientifically they could not continue as effective peaceful units of the Indian Union to be. History shows us how the free cities, duchies, bishoprics, baronies, tiny principalities were grouped together under the Holy Roman Empire in Central Europe. In Germany, it was solved in the only scientific way of those rulers being allowed to retain their titles and some revenue. Their powers

*For a more complete account of the historical background of Indian States vide Treaties, Engagements, and Sanads, by K. R. R. Sastri, 1942, pages 19 to 85.